

CONGRESS WILL PROD PALMER IN WAR CAMP LOOT

\$72,000,000 Graft in 16
Cantonments Alone,
Say Experts.

NO ACTIONS STARTED
House Resolution Ignored
for Six Months by the
Attorney-General.

GOETHALS BARED PLOTS
Cost Plus System Used to
Mule Large Sums From
Taxpayers.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD.
Washington, D. C., Oct. 30.

Although six months have passed since the House of Representatives, by a vote of 297 to 4, adopted a resolution calling on the Attorney-General to institute criminal and civil proceedings against those guilty of defrauding the Government in the construction of army camps and cantonments, no steps have been taken by Mr. Palmer to do so, and further action probably will be taken by Congress next session, according to members here.

While the cost plus system of construction approved by Secretary of War Baker against the advice of Gen. Goethals not only permitted but encouraged a tremendous amount of waste which might technically come within the law, according to Representative McCulloch of Ohio, a member of the committee that investigated this phase of war expenditures, the testimony disclosed many cases of theft, fraud and individual guilt demanding the attention of the Department of Justice.

On the sixteen cantonments alone, not to mention the large number of other camps built, the taxpayers of the country were billed of about \$72,000,000, representing a difference between actual cost as determined by the War Department records and the proper cost as estimated for the committee by a contractor of wide experience and financial ability. This contractor, at the request of the committee, made a survey and estimates of the cost of Camp Grant, Rockford, Ill. He was directed to estimate as nearly as possible under conditions as they existed at the time the cantonment was built.

After careful study he placed the cost at \$5,119,544, whereas the actual cost of the cantonment, as determined by the War Department, was \$14,689,620, a difference of \$5,570,076. The actual cost of the sixteen cantonments was \$206,632,920. The loss on Camp Grant was taken as typical and the total proper cost of all the cantonments estimated from it at not to exceed \$128,101,359.

Figures on 16 Big Cantonments.
The following table gives in the nearest even million of dollars the actual cost, the estimated proper cost under the bid system and the loss thus arrived at for each of the sixteen great cantonments.

Cantonment.	Actual Cost.	Proper Cost.	Loss.
Camp Ives.	\$10,000,000	\$11,000,000	\$1,000,000
Camp Grant.	\$14,689,620	\$5,119,544	\$9,570,076
Camp Upton.	\$15,000,000	\$9,000,000	\$6,000,000
Camp Grant.	\$14,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$9,000,000
Camp Pike.	\$12,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$4,000,000
Camp Custer.	\$13,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$5,000,000
Camp Sherman.	\$13,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$5,000,000
Camp Dix.	\$13,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$5,000,000
Camp Jack.	\$12,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$5,000,000
Camp Puma.	\$11,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$4,000,000
Camp Gordon.	\$11,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$4,000,000
Camp Dodge.	\$10,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$4,000,000
Camp Lewis.	\$9,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$4,000,000
Camp Taylor.	\$8,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$3,000,000
Camp Travis.	\$8,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$3,000,000

When the many camps built are taken into consideration with the cantonments the total construction costs run to a much higher figure. This total is estimated at \$1,200,000,000 by Representative Graham, chairman of the investigating committee, who says from 40 to 60 per cent of the money was wasted on account largely of the cost plus system, which, he charges, not only increased costs, but demoralized labor, delayed completion of camps and subjected soldiers to conditions that induced disease and death.

Goethals Details System's Evils.
"The cost plus system leads to great extravagance," Gen. Goethals, testifying before the committee. "The contractor is not interested in what it is going to cost the Government. He is going to get his 10 per cent, anyhow, and the fact of the matter is his return, being based on a percentage of the cost—the more he pays for labor and material the greater is his return. There is no incentive to economize. The Government takes all the risks and the contractor takes none."

Gen. Goethals advised employment of construction engineers, with authority to select competent men and to draft them into the service as a quicker and better way to get the cantonments built, and opposed the employment of contractors in any circumstances; but his advice was not followed. Gen. Little, chief of the cantonment division, also opposed the cost plus system at the time it was adopted, but, according to his testimony, finally bowed to "superior judgment."

Under the cost plus system the contractors went on the job entitled to a fee which ranged on a sliding scale from 10 to 6 per cent, and the contract was so drawn that the contractor, in fact, was required to give only his personal services for the fees received. As many subcontractors as desired could be put on the work.

The result was, according to members of the committee, that a contractor without assuming any financial responsibility whatever was in a position to make a maximum fee of \$250,000 covering a period of a few months for mere supervision and the furnishing of a skeleton organization, for which the Government paid. Meantime some of the greatest engineers in the country sat at Washington with little to do.

possible time was also attacked in testimony taken by the investigating committee, the majority of the members of which concluded that the cost plus system meant a delay of at least 50 per cent in time of construction.

According to the report made to Congress by the committee construction work was not started until June 25, although war was declared April 7, and was not completed for housing 654,000 men until December 1. If the Goethals plan had been adopted work could have been started much earlier, the organization of the Engineers Corps being ready for immediate operations, as was testified by high ranking officers. The latter could have accomplished the task according to testimony, by August 10 at half the cost.

Testimony showed also that the Government's supervision of the construction work was in many instances highly superficial and that in at least one case an employee of a contractor was proposed for a commission by his firm, the same given him by the War Department, and he was assigned to supervision of the construction of the cantonment which his former employer was building. He afterward returned to his former employer with the contracting firm.

Some instances are cited from the riot of waste that was sworn to. At Camp Sherman lumber was burned in such quantities that the men who burned it were compelled to lie off frequently for the reason that the fires got so hot they were afraid of burning down the cantonment. Of 50,000,000 feet of lumber used at that camp the testimony was that at least 12,500,000 feet were wasted.

At Camp Meade, Col. Oury testified that he employed his entire regiment of 3,000 men in carrying the waste lumber off the drill ground. At Camp Sherman, roofing material was piled like cordwood out in the sun and two-thirds became absolutely useless for the reason that it could not be unrolled. Tons of nails were hauled to the river and canal and thrown away.

Many Useless Vehicles.
Automobiles were hired by the day, involved at least \$400, for which the Government paid more than \$500 each as rental. The testimony showed 70 trucks and 450 teams on the payroll at Camp Sherman, with no less than \$50 of the teams. Part of the time the excess teams were kept hidden away in the gravel pit, or ordered to drive around the camp to make it appear they were being used.

When work started upon the camps there was an effort to get just as many men as possible on the payroll and wages were fixed with little regard to the workers' experience or ability. It was testified that out of gangs of twenty-five to thirty men drawing wages as journeymen carpenters there would not be over three or four men who had ever worked at that trade.

One witness testified that he had seen plumbers spend half a day building a sunshade under which to fix a joint that it would have taken two or three half an hour to put in, and another said that he had seen three men have hold of an ordinary two foot eight inch door to put it on the hinges. In fact so many men were on all jobs they were in one another's way.

Representative McCulloch says a careful analysis of the testimony shows that work in all branches could have been done in less than half the time had the Government secured a day's work for a day's wage and had the workmen been classified according to their efficiency; that it was a common thing for men to check in in the morning and leave a job coming back at night to check out, and receiving a full day's pay.

The finding of the investigating committee was that the demoralization of labor resulted from the general knowledge among the workmen that the contract was a cost plus percentage basis impression and the common talk prevailing that the more spent and the longer the work lasted the better it suited the contractors who hired them.

**12,000,000 TON OUTPUT
OF SOFT COAL IN WEEK**
Year's Record Still 8,500,000
Tons Below 1917.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31.—Soft coal production has exceeded 12,000,000 tons for the third week in succession, as shown by reports compiled by the United States Geological Survey. Estimates made public to-day placed the output for the week ended October 23 at 12,146,000 net tons, while loadings on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of last week increased over the corresponding days of the previous week. The year's record, however, is still about 8,500,000 tons behind 1917.

Dumplings at tide-water reached 1,775,000 net tons for the week ended October 24. Exports amounted to 664,000 tons. Tonnage supplied to bunker coal increased to 250,000 tons attributable to increased demand coincident with the British coal strike.

**CATHOLICS PARADE
IN SCHOOL PROTEST**
Want Michigan to Retain
Parochial Institutions.

DETROIT, Oct. 31.—As a protest against a proposed amendment to the State Constitution that would, in effect, abolish parochial and private schools in Michigan, approximately 100,000 Catholics of Detroit and nearby cities marched in a parade through the center of the city here to-day and then attended a field mass at Navy Field.

The amendment will be voted on in the general election Tuesday.

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The emergency construction committee's contention that the Government was not in position to undertake the work is denied by Gen. Goethals, Gen. Black and Col. Sherrill of the Engineers Corps of the army, who say the Government had every facility for carrying on the work in the most economical and expeditious way.

BEEF AND PORK PRICES DECLINED IN OCTOBER

American Meat Packers Issue
Statement.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31.—Wholesale prices of beef and pork declined substantially during October, according to a statement issued to-night by the Institute of American Meat Packers.

"Selling" prices of carcasses beef throughout the country showed an average decline of approximately 13 per cent at the end of October, as compared with the first week in September," said the statement. "Fresh pork declined heavily. In the domestic trade from October 2 to October 26 the wholesale prices of light pork loins, whence come pork chops, declined about 21 per cent.

"Between October 2 and October 26

pork shoulders declined about 10 per cent, and smoked hams and standard bacon fell slightly less than 10 per cent."

TO STORE U. S. COTTON.
ROTTERDAM, Oct. 30.—To facilitate trade in cotton with Germany and America a cotton exchange, which will control a storage capacity up to 100,000 bales, has been opened here.

MOTHER-IN-LAW'S PIPE GOT ON RUBLE'S NERVES

She Complains That He
Blackened Her Eyes.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD.
BUFFALO, Oct. 31.—John Ruble's mother-in-law smokes a pipe. According to the story told by Ruble in the City Court to-day, he is convinced that the pipe must be a family heirloom; at

any rate, he was positive in his assertions that it must have been smoked for many years. He complained to the court that the odor of it drives his lodgers away.

His mother-in-law, Ruble explained, came to visit him and his wife about two years ago. She is Mrs. Rodie A. Williams. When she came it was understood that she was to stay for two weeks. The weeks became months, he told the judge, and still she stayed and smoked. A few months ago Ruble casually inquired of his mother-in-law

if she weren't going to leave soon. Her answer, he told the judge, was long and emphatic, but including nothing about going away.

"She defied me, Judge," he declared, "she defied me to put her out!"

A few days ago Ruble did. He deposited her pipe and other belongings on the sidewalk beside her. Mrs. Williams complained that her eye was blacked in the course of the unpleasantness and caused Ruble's arrest on a charge of assault. He denied the assault and the case was put over for a week.



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Disabled Ex-Service Men Declared Eligible for
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UNCEASING efforts are being made by the Federal Board for Vocational Education to locate the ten-thousand sick, injured and disabled ex-service men in Greater New York, many of whom are not aware that the Government will furnish them medical care, training and placement in suitable positions, absolutely free of charge. The public is asked and urged to help in getting this information direct to the men who need it.

The Traveling Squad of the Federal Board last week at the Eighth Coast Defense Armory, Kingsbridge Road and Jerome Avenue, Bronx, was encouraged by the results of the clean-up campaign. Cases of 125 applicants out of the listed 1,200 disabled ex-service men in The Bronx alone have already been passed upon. This week, Nov. 1 to 6, the squad will meet applicants at the Twenty-second Engineer Armory, Fort Washington Avenue and 168th Street.

The most important development of the campaign is that the Government officials came in contact with men, greatly in need of assistance, who had never heard of the Federal Board. The personnel of the Traveling Squad numbers approximately fifteen, exclusive of physicians and eligibility officers. No man will be held up by red tape.

Members of the squad are present at the Armory from 9 A. M. to 9 P. M., daily, so that men who work during the day may present their claims.

Men eligible for vocational training will immediately be placed in the hands of the training department, who will place them in a school, or on a job. The three kinds of training are:

Training on a job with a good firm.
Training in a trade school, a commercial, agricultural, or professional school.
Training in an evening school, or by correspondence courses.

Training of the first and second classes may be awarded with a maintenance allowance of \$80 to \$170 per month, if examination proves that the man has a disability preventing his return to pre-war vocation—and the disability is traceable to service.

If a man has, or is, receiving compensation from the War Risk Insurance Bureau, he is entitled to a course, at Government expense, without maintenance pay. Men should bring their discharge papers and any letters received from the Bureau of War Risk Insurance regarding compensation with them.

The Rotary Club of New York will assist any ex-service men in securing justice and fair play from any of the Government departments and will also assist them in securing jobs before or after training if the Government officials fail to do so.

For general information not known to ex-service men, or to the public, Rotary Headquarters, Hotel McAlpin, Pennsylvania 789 will furnish any service necessary.

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